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Approved For Release 2005/11/23 : CIA-RDP80B01495R000500080018-3

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11 October 1974

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Comment on the Possible Soviet Sale of a
Nuclear Power Reactor to Cuba

1. We have no direct information that would corroborate the Soviet plan to sell a nuclear reactor to Cuba. We have learned, however, that Minister Neporozhniy is going on to Mexico City, a logical route to Cuba. The members of the Soviet delegation who were with him are returning to Moscow.

2. The Cuban Academy of Sciences has had a small but active nuclear training and investigative group for some years and as recently as August, 1974, the Cubans were noted engaged in an economic feasibility study concerning nuclear power generation. The Cubans do not have an experimental or research reactor.

3. Should the Soviets sell a nuclear power reactor to Cuba, it would probably be a 440 megawatt pressurized water reactor of the type that they have built in Eastern Europe. We judge the Soviet record on safeguards as good. They do not have, however, a good record as far as investing in safety features is concerned. In the past, they have not installed their reactors in safety vessels but there are indications that they are now actively working on such vessels.

4. The 440 megawatt reactor uses slightly enriched fuel which is not suitable for military purposes. The depleted fuel rods would have to be returned to the USSR for reprocessing. The plutonium produced by the reactor is recoverable only during fuel reprocessing. The Cubans would not be able to master reprocessing technology on their own for many years and the USSR could be expected to prohibit them from doing so under a private arrangement even though Cuba has not signed the NPT.

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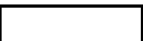
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Remarks: Attached is a brief comment on the matter of a possible Soviet sale of a nuclear power reactor to Cuba. We will look into this further and inform you promptly if any additional information is unearthed. Also,					
George A. Carver, Jr. D/DCI/NIO					
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MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Walsh *File: NIO - Carter*

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